

Company helps small businesses in MENA build online stores in minutes

Agility Ventures invests in ExpandCart e-commerce platform

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 28: Agility Ventures, the venture capital arm of global logistics company Agility, announced that it has invested in ExpandCart, a Cairo-based e-commerce enabler that allows entrepreneurs and small businesses to build online stores quickly and without any technical expertise.

The investment is part of a funding round closed this year by Agility, Graphene Venture Capital, Betatron, and other angel investors.

ExpandCart provides merchants with mobile-responsive online templates available in Arabic and English, as well as offering marketing, support, and hosting services. Additionally, it allows store owners to integrate with more than 20 payment and shipping options, streamlining the store-building process from start to finish.

Henadi Al-Saleh, Agility Chairperson and leader of Agility's logistics venture strategy, announced the investment, saying it was part of Agility's drive to expand its leadership in digital logistics and e-commerce.



From left to right: ExpandCart co-founders; Amr Shawqy and Sameh Nabil

merce.

"We think the potential of both digital logistics and e-commerce logistics is enormous. But to realize this potential, we also need to support the larger eco-system for digital

trade. In other words, we need to go upstream," Al Saleh said. "Agility is investing more than \$100 million in Shipa.com, a digital logistics platform that allows businesses and consumers to manage freight, e-commerce and urban deliveries online. The ExpandCart partnership helps get more businesses trading across borders in the first place."



Henadi Al Saleh, Chairperson, Agility

More than 10,000 sellers have

launched their stores on ExpandCart, allowing the merchants to receive more than 190,000 orders. In addition to store-building tools, ExpandCart offers sellers support for digital marketing, handling and fulfilment, a point-of-sale system, branded native mobile apps, and after-sale service.

Amr Shawqy, ExpandCart CEO and co-founder, said Agility's investment and logistics expertise will help accelerate the company's growth.

"The e-commerce sector is booming in the Middle East, and thousands of businesses are in position to expand their sales online. With help from Agility, our goal is to scale and support Middle East merchants throughout the entire e-commerce process," Shawqy said. "Our engineers are continually working to provide innovative e-commerce solutions, and we have a substantial product roadmap for the coming period. With Agility behind us, we can unlock the incredible potential of the region, especially for its small

businesses and entrepreneurs."

According to a 2019 Bain & Company study, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) e-commerce market is worth \$8.3 billion and has grown by 25% annually since 2014. It is expected to reach \$28.5 billion by 2022 and could grow even larger, given that e-commerce penetration in MENA remains low compared with other regions.

"The Middle East retail market is worth more than \$231 billion. And although e-commerce is just a small percentage today, the more that we create conditions that allow businesses to trade online, the more we will see e-commerce's market share grow," Al-Saleh said.

"Agility Ventures will work closely with ExpandCart to help it grow and reach more customers," Al-Saleh said. "In addition to funding, Agility will partner with ExpandCart's team and offer the last-mile logistics and e-fulfillment expertise that is critical to successful online businesses."



Burj Khalifa features Dakar Saudi Arabia 2019 campaign video

Motor race begins Jan 5

Burj Khalifa to feature video of Dakar Saudi Arabia 2020

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Dec 28: An international campaign has launched across a number of major cities across the world to mark the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hosting the Dakar Rally for the first time in Asia from Jan 5 to 17.

The campaign features an action-filled video ad that will be screened in iconic locations around the world such as Burj Khalifa in Dubai, Times Square in New York and Leicester Square in London, in addition to Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam in Saudi Arabia. The campaign will also appear in Milan and Madrid as well as Paris, the home of Dakar Rally.

Through the campaign and with the challenging race set to begin in less than two weeks, Dakar Saudi Arabia 2020's host country is aiming to introduce the uncharted desert of the kingdom to the world of motorsport to learn about its distinctive terrain and what to expect when the adventure begins on Jan 5.

HRH Prince Khalid bin Sultan Abdullah Al Faisal, Chairman of the Saudi Arabian Motorsport Federation, said: "This campaign is our way of giving the world a glimpse of Saudi Arabia's stunning natural beauty, fascinating desert, unparalleled hospitality, and world-class standards in staging international sporting events. We are thrilled to host such a great adven-

ture in Saudi Arabia and to write a new chapter in the history of the world's most challenging rally."

With less than two weeks to go till the demanding race, the Saudi desert is ready to welcome more than 550 drivers from 62 world countries to experience the spectacular nature and unique terrain of the uncharted Saudi desert.

Dakar Saudi Arabia 2020 gets underway in Jeddah before drivers and crews navigate their way to the north through the challenging trip along the coast, where the drivers pass by Red Sea Project and the futuristic megacity of Neom.

They cruise then through the sandy hills of Ha'il on the way to Riyadh before taking a turn to the west in the centre of the kingdom's enormous desert and then looping back towards the east to enter the Empty Quarter ahead of crossing the finish line in Qiddiya.

By hosting major international sporting events, Saudi Arabia is building a legacy as a world sports and entertainment destination, and an event of the calibre of Dakar Rally would surely cement the kingdom's status.

Dakar Saudi Arabia 2020 will see pilots drive specially modified vehicles, trucks, quad, SxS, and motorbikes, designed to handle 12 stages of various terrains.

ter will not be considered.

2. Please write your story or memory and sign it with your full name, and your contact number.

3. It will be great if you send us your personal photos or those of the place related to the story (optional).

Your story will be part of a new book to be published by DAL.

I am confident that your contributions will be an essential part of the history of Amricani. Share with us!

NYF offers free yoga classes: NYF Kuwait offers free yoga, breathing, meditation and reiki classes by a well-experienced female yoga teacher for all age groups. Classes are given on the basis of different health problems, stress and other problems by different techniques. Contact: 99315825.

Leadership Excellence Course: The Leadership Excellence Course (LEC) is a course modeled on the

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 28: As one of the lead contributors to child welfare, Burgan Bank participated in a celebration that was organised by the Autism Partnership Kuwait (APK) for the rehabilitation and treatment of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Bringing joy to the children this season, the bank's Public Relations representatives distributed special gifts and toys to ensure a memorable day.

Burgan Bank's continued support through increased activities and interactions to APK reflects its keenness to elevate the lives of children with autism and facilitate their integration into society. Through its cooperation with Autism Partnership Kuwait, the bank also aims to raise awareness about autism and highlight the importance of early diagnosis and its treatment methods.

The children and their families expressed their happiness during the celebratory event that included a range of exciting activities and competitions. Burgan Bank's commitment to different humanitarian initiatives reinforces its role as a positive catalyst for dynamic change in society.

Burgan Bank will maintain its journey of driving meaningful outcomes in the coming year through its involvement in their many activities and educational workshops.

Burgan Bank's support to this initiative falls under its full-fledged community program entitled 'ENGAGE' - Together to be the change. This program sheds light on important aspects affecting every segment of the society by promoting social welfare through educational, cultural, social and health initiatives. Burgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the Kuwaiti society.

Seerah of Rasoolullah who is the best model of leadership for all mankind. The LEC focuses on the lessons that we can learn from the Seerah of Rasoolullah and see how we can apply them in our lives to become winners in this world and the next.

The objectives of the course are 1. Understand what leadership is from the Seerah of Rasoolullah and how to apply it in our lives today 2. Understand the purpose of our lives and learn to live that purpose with confidence 3. Understand the importance of connecting to Allah and learn how to do it 4. Understand how to leverage your strengths and overcome weaknesses 5. Understand how to articulate your life goal and create a road map to achieve it.

For more information please visit www.leckuwait.com or call 99514995 / 66363310.

Ugandans register with UIK: Are you a Ugandan living and working in Kuwait? Would you like to get in touch with other Ugandans in Kuwait both socially and professionally? Then please get in touch with us. We would like to invite you to register with the Ugandans in Kuwait (UIK) association, an informal organization of Ugandans living and working in Kuwait. The purpose of this exercise is to get together as Ugandans and to consider taking the first steps to establishing a more formal organisation. This association is voluntary. It is designed to create a forum for Ugandans in Kuwait to foster a sense of community, to communicate more effectively with each other and to encourage Ugandans out here to work together. We are also planning a celebration to mark 50 years of Ugandan's Independence this year. If you have any questions regarding this association or if you are interested in registering, then please send us an email at ugandansinkuwait@gmail.com. We hope to hear from you soon.

Free drum music classes: Free professional drum music classes are available at Salmiya for all age groups from beginners to advanced by a well experienced drum teacher. For more details: 94974295.

Indian Embassy SPDC notice: Attention of all Indian associations/Indian schools in Kuwait is once again drawn to Scholarship Programme for Diaspora

Bank brings joy to special children this season

Burgan Bank distributes gifts to kids at APK



A photo from the event.

Special viewing of award-winning films ends cultural fest

ASCC celebrates a century of Korean cinema

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 28: Following the recent cultural festivals hosted by Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre, audiences were enamored by the award-winning performances and direction showcased in the films, 'Little Forest' and 'Extreme Job'. The week-long tribute to Korean cinema marked the end of the event that witnessed several celebratory activities during July and November this year.

As part of the 100 year anniversary of Korean films, the special viewing at its theatre was held in the presence of HE South Korean Ambassador to the country, Hong Youngki and among keen moviegoers. The popular 2019 South Korean drama and action comedy films gained international and national recognition for 'Best Director', 'Best Actress' and 'Top 10 Films' by leading awarding organisations.

The first and second part of the Cultural Festival included an exhibition on Korea's traditional costumes, a make-up station with Korean cosmetics and hair stations, a jewellery station followed by a preliminary musical contest to narrate the country's heritage. In collaboration with the Korean Embassy in Kuwait, traditional Korean visual artist Ms Lee Hyan also dis-



A photo from the event.

played her unique works on the country's culture and significant attributes during an art exhibition entitled 'The Beauty of Korea'. More significantly, the event commemorated 40 years of strong and successful diplomatic ties between the Republic of Korea and the State of Kuwait.

Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre is one the many projects devel-

oped by the Amiri Diwan to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and promote critical, creative, and interpretive thinking within Kuwaiti society through world-class exhibitions and educational public programmes.

To learn more about the upcoming programmes, please visit www.asccw.com or email us at: PR@asccw.com

Customer Contact Center available 24/7

Gulf Bank extends best wishes for New Year 2020

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 28: On the occasion of the New Year, and as per the approved guidelines set by the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), all Gulf Bank branches and its head office will be closed Wednesday, Jan 1, until Saturday, Jan 4, 2020, and will resume working on Sunday, Jan 5, 2020.

Gulf Bank's customers will continue to be served around the clock through the dedicated Customer Contact Center, which can be reached at 1805805. Moreover, Gulf Bank's Interactive Teller Machines (ITMs)



will be available during the holiday from 8 am until 11:45 pm in Jabriya, Shaab, Fahaheel (Alghanim Electronics), and South Surra (Al Salam). Clients can also direct their

queries through the Gulf Bank WhatsApp service on 65805805. To find out more about the latest products and services, customers can access the bank's online portal (www.e-gulfbank.com) or download the Mobile Banking App (App Store/Android) to monitor accounts and conduct self-service banking transactions. Customers can also connect with Gulf Bank on its various social media channels.

Gulf Bank's management and staff take this opportunity to wish everyone a Prosperous 2020.

Hotel Management, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and some other courses.

The scheme is open to NRIs/PIOs from over 40 countries (including Kuwait) having substantial Indian Diaspora population.

The Scheme was revamped and launched in July 2016. Under the revamped Scheme, number of scholarships has been enhanced from 100 to 150 with introduction of 50 scholarships for children of Indian workers employed in the Emigration Check Required (ECR)

countries. The Scheme is now applicable to four categories of applicants:

- (i) Persons of Indian Origin
- (ii) Non-Resident Indians
- (iii) Children of Indian workers working in ECR countries (including Kuwait).
- (iv) Children of Indian workers in ECR countries - studying in India

The institutions that are covered under this Scheme are:

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click

General

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Share your story with Amricani:

Do you or any of your family members, acquaintances or friends happen to have a story with the American Missionary hospital in Kuwait (Mustashfa Lemraicani) during the years from 1914-1967, the official period of offering medical services in Kuwait?

Please share with us your story or your memory during those old days by writing the event and sending it to the following email address: Mystery@dar museum.org.kw

Notes: 1. Please send your story only to the above mentioned email. Story shared in Instagram, Facebook or Twitter